ANNUAL INSECT CONTROL REPORT, DISTRICT 4

R.H. RUTLEDGE
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Insect Control, D-4
(Annual Report)

The Forester,

Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

No infestations of Dendroctonus beetles are reported from the Nevada Forests. The tussock moth infestation in alpine fir in Jarbidge Canyon on the Humboldt Forest has spread to possibly better than one-half a section. The trees attacked last season started new growth but soon died. Also, on the Humboldt where old stands of aspen are going to pieces, due to injury by borers, an effort is being made to protect new growth until it is well enough established to prevent damage from grazing.

Thirty trees which were found infested with D. engelmanii on the Fishlake Forest were utilized for lumber and the slabs burned.

Since the control work in western yellow pine began on the Ashley Forest in 1926 there have been treated or removed for use at sawmills, approximately 915 trees. In general the beetles are under control except for an area on the Manila district. In the fall of 1927 a crew of four, consisting of rangers and guards, treated 192 trees in ten days, and last spring 71 additional trees were treated. Although there has been a spread and gradual rise in this section during the past three years, the largest units have now been controlled. The ranger reports 100 sorrel top trees in groups of from two to 10 trees on the Manila district. A total of 563 trees have been disposed of or treated in this district since 1926. Supervisor Nord plans to undertake control measures here during May, 1929 and requests $150 for supplies and travel expenses. This cleaning up of the remaining infestation seems good business and the Supervisor's recommendation is approved.

Copy for information Mr. J. M. Miller

With the exception of the Cache Forest, which will be discussed later, no other Utah Forests report infestations requiring control measures.

There is no renewal of the infestation in yellow pine on the Kaibab, Powell and Dixie Forests but the local force are watching closely and will if possible treat even small groups of trees if any are discovered.

The western group of Idaho Forests, including the Idaho, Weiser, Payette, Boise, Sawtooth, Lemhi, Challis and Salmon Forests, report no infestation justifying control measures.

There were two infestation areas in lodgepole pine reported on the Lemhi Forest, one east of the Pahsimeroi Valley and one on the north fork of Lost River, there being two units in each area. These were examined in detail by Mr. Morse who found that the infestation had been going on for four or five years and the 1928 attack was a 10 to one reduction over 1927. From general conditions of the beetle work, he believed the epidemic on the Lemhi was just about over. For this reason and also because the lodgepole occurs here in small bodies in a Douglas fir type with Douglas fir reproduction present, no control measures are recommended other than the obtaining of the removal of as much of the infested material as is possible under free administrative use.

The intense infestation in the lodgepole pine on the Salmon, Challis, Payette, Idaho and Boise Forests has continued. It has spread somewhat to the Sawtooth Forest on the head of the Salmon River. The Payette Forest reports over large areas over half the lodgepole pine killed and a spreading to areas not previously infested. Since control measures are beyond consideration here, our chief concern is with the greatly increased fire hazard since crown fires could easily be carried in the dead tops, particularly before the needles fall and when, in a few years, the trees begin to come down it will create a condition in which fires will be almost impossible to control.

The situation in eastern Idaho and Wyoming presents a quite different problem. Here we have large areas of lodgepole pine which are at present merchantable or will be in the near future. The chief damage is from two sources; that from a spread of the Montana infestation southward to the more northern Forests in this District if that is possible, and the building up of local infestation units. The latter would defeat successful control of the spread from Montana. Mr. Evenden has discussed in detail the problem of control of the spread from Montana.

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Briefly, the possibilities of units of distribution developing within the area are as follows: From the north end of the Cache Forest eastward, there being an active infestation here in several units with approximately 2,000 newly infested trees. From three points within the Caribou Forest where small but active infestations occur totalling approximately 400 trees, 300 of which will have to be treated. The Wyoming Forest has an outbreak on upper Grays River totalling approximately 3,000 trees in a rather compact unit. The Teton Forest reports an active infestation near the southwest corner of the Forest consisting of 275 newly infested trees. The Targhee Forest has three units of infestation, one in the Spencer District at the northwest end of the Forest with 2,750 infested trees, one a few miles south of the Yellowstone Park at Conant Creek with 3,000 infested trees and at Canyon and Milk Creeks, west of Teton Basin, with 6,635 infested trees. They all need consideration in connection with the general possibilities of increased seriousness and spread to the large body of lodgepole timber in this region. The larger outbreaks, as on the Targhee, Wyoming, and Cache, all carry an immediate threat of becoming difficult projects for control. The smaller ones are active and carry the same threat in less immediate intensity but in their present state should be very easily controlled. These are discussed below in detail:

Cache:

The 2,000 trees reported in the main infestation are on the higher section of the Forest north of the Imigration Canyon Road, in small units from 20 to 100 trees each, except for one unit a few miles northeast of Sherman Peak which contains 1,500 trees. These units lie in a belt from two to six miles wide and 15 miles long. Control measures have been carried on in this area for the past two seasons by means of tie sales and free administrative use and some direct control. The trees in the infestations described are in small groups rather inaccessible or, in the case of the largest infestation unit, the trees are too small to be used for sawtimber or ties. The danger of leaving this outbreak unchecked would be in the destruction of material of high value to the surrounding settlements and the probability of eventual spread towards the east to the Caribou and Wyoming Forests. It is estimated that $8,500 will be necessary to carry out control work on the Cache Forest for 1929.

Caribou:

Although the three main areas of infestation on this Forest are small, they are certainly dangerous and the broods are healthy.

The Sheep Creek unit has 101 sorrel tops and 195 new trees attacked in 1926 on about 200 acres. The average size of the trees attacked is 12" to 14" but some 8" trees were infested. This is an area where there is a demand for fuel and a very considerable number of sorrel tops have been already taken out so the count does not indicate the true progress of infestation. Approximately 50% of the infested trees may be removed through free use to ranchers.

The Browns Canyon area has 128 newly infested trees and 125 sorrel tops on about 80 acres. There apparently has been an infestation here for several years with a considerable increase during the last two or three years. There will be no opportunity to dispose of any of these trees for utilization.

The Pole Canyon areas contain 104 newly infested trees and 264 red tops on 267 acres. Although these figures do not indicate an increase, on some portions there are more newly infested trees than red tops and a number of the red tops now contain live beetles or larvae. It is probable that 25 to 50% of the infested trees will be removed by administrative use but the balance should be treated.

These three areas will total approximately 300 trees necessary to treat at a probable cost of $275.

Wyoming:

The infestation on Crays River, although in patches, may be described as extending on both sides of the river above the Meadow Ranger Station and up Sheep Creek to McDougal Gap. The report shows within this general area approximately 3,000 red tops and less than 1,000 black tops with very considerable new infestation present. This is in the center of a very important lodgepole pine unit and will demand careful control. We do not have a good cruise of the newly infested trees and, as is usual, we will probably find twice as many trees as we expect. Less is known about this infestation than any of the others and it will be impracticable to make further examination until next spring. Owing to the inaccessibility of the area and uncertainty regarding the number of trees to be treated, the cost of control measures are set at $5,000.

Teton:

The only infestation here is between Taylor Creek and Mosquito Creek, in the southwest corner of the Forest. A check shows approximately 300 black tops, 800 red tops and 374 newly infested trees on about 160 acres. In view of the large areas of uninfested lodgepole pine to the south and east it is very desirable that this infestation be placed under control. It is estimated that this can be done at a cost of $225.

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Targhee:

You have already been furnished a copy of the report on the control work accomplished this year. We are enclosing a copy of the Supervisor's report for next season's work.

Conant Creek Project.

The Conant project is a new infestation which has suddenly spread over a comparatively wide territory. Its location within a very important body of mature timber and its proximity to the Yellowstone Park make it a dangerous menace. The infestation is not yet at its height and control is imperative to prevent its reaching an epidemic stage. There are 3,000 infested trees here from 6" to 18" in diameter on approximately 5,000 acres.

Milk Creek:

There were 3,152 trees treated here in 1928 on three of the four units. Newly infested trees on the three areas treated total 950 trees. The other unit untreated in 1928 contains 1,200 infested trees, 250 of which are on privately owned coal lands.

Canyon Creek Project:

This infestation is spread out on the west side of the Big Hole Mountains over the divide from the Milk Creek project. It is naturally more isolated by topography and young timber than the other projects. It, however, joins the Milk Creek project on the north. The infestation has continued for five years and has declined 50%. It is considered unsafe to leave as large an infestation without control and action to this end is proposed for next season.

Spencer Project:

Because of the apparent decline in this infestation it was not made a control project in 1928. The Pleasant Valley unit has declined from 2,000 black tops and 800 red tops to 50 infested trees. Part of the Rattlesnake unit had 317 trees treated last year. The other two units are about at their peak and are not declining. There are 2,750 trees to be treated. It should be a control project for 1929.

The total of the projects recommended above for the Targhee is 12,375 trees. Although the Supervisor sets a much lower cost, in view of the possibility of more work being necessary, as the Teton Forest

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reports some infestation near the boundary line of the Yellowstone Park, and the possibility of higher costs, I believe we should have $15,000 allotted for the Targhee work. We may find that the burning standing tree method can not be used entirely in which event the cost will be nearer $1.00 per tree than 50 cents.

Following is given a summary for the recommended projects for control in the District. These are all based on control of active infestations with particular consideration to fitting in with the general plan of keeping the large bodies of valuable lodgepole on the group of Forests in eastern Idaho and western Wyoming free from epidemics. It seems that to do any less would risk making ineffective all our control efforts. If special congressional appropriation is necessary it should be requested.

S U M M A R Y

Forest	Project	Trees	Cost
Ashley	Manila	100	$ 150
Cache	All areas	2,260	2600
Caribou	All areas	300	275
Wyoming	Sheep Creek	3,000	5000
Teton	All areas	274	225
Targhee	All areas	12375	15000
Total for District		18309	$23150

Very truly yours,

R. H. Rutledge

Encl.

District Forester.